

Rising Before the Dawn- Finding joy in hardship.

Sermon Notes

Oct. 02, 2022

Review:

1. Jesus is coming back. Are you ready?
2. Asking questions brings understanding and understanding guides you how to live.
3. Knowing and living the truth will protect you from deception.
4. Today- changing our perspective concerning hardship or suffering.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 *“For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

What this does not say:

- That Christians will not suffer.
- That Christians will not experience wrath.

What it does say is that those who belong to Christ are not appointed to suffer the wrath of God. Our appointment is to experience life eternal with God.

Christians will suffer from the wrath of man. **Matthew 24:4-13**

- Earthly authorities will come against you. “...handed over...” (9a)
- **All** nations will hate you. (9b)
- Wrath will even come on us from those we love.

Luke 21:16 *“You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death.”*

There will be a dividing of the church. (10)

- The true believer will suffer betrayal and hate from the false believer because they stay rooted in the truth of God’s Word.
 - Sexuality and gender issues.
 - The exclusivity of Jesus.
 - The unchanging nature of God.
 - The sovereignty of God.
- There will be a gathering of a new false church. (11)
 - Could this be the “prostitute” spoken of in Revelation?
 - Certainly, the gathering of the “itching ears.”

2 Timothy 4:3 *“For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their **itching ears** want to hear.”*

- There will be a “cooling” of many hearts that are rendered ineffective, and as a result no threat to the enemy. (12)
- The true church stands firm through it all.

Where does the ability for the church to stand firm come from?

Answer: We handle our current hardships with a different perspective.

We grow most in our faith through hardship. Hebrews 12:4-11

- We need to see hardship through a different lens. (7)
 - Need to see hardship or suffering through the lens of child to father. (7b)
 - If God truly loves you, he will not shield you from challenges. (6)
 - God uses hardship to sharpen our faith.
 - If you are going through the fire of difficulty, consider it as God’s affirmation of you being his child. (8)
- The purpose of going through the crucible of suffering or hardship is to produce a stronger faith. (11)
 - **Genesis 50:20** God does not initiate the evil, but he brings about a fruit that evil does not want.
 - Produces stronger character rooted in righteousness.
 - It produces peace amid greater storms.
 - As Hebrews 12:11 states we only see that in hindsight.
 - **Example:**
 - *Death of two friends- woke me up to Lordship.*
 - *My wife’s journey with cancer- strengthened my marriage and stronger empathy for those experiencing the similar paths.*
 - *My parent’s accident this past May—reminder to always be prepared and the beauty of being in a church family.*
 - *Challenges as a pastor/leader- that you must keep growing.*

Standing firm through storms of the future will come from the strength gained from standing in the storms of the past. Matthew 24:13

- Peace not panicked! **Hebrews 12:11**
- Righteous—not deceived. **Hebrews 12:11**
- Joy—not resentment because we now see that God really loves us.

Joy and peace rule because we know through experience that the Father God does not abandon his own!

Communion: Matthew 16:24 *“Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.’”*